

CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION/CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION FORM

03-ED-50	75.4-77.3	03-3C380
Dist.-Co.-Rte. (or Local Agency)	P.M./P.M.	E.A/Project No. Federal-Aid Project No. (Local Project)/Project No.
PROJECT DESCRIPTION: (Briefly describe project including need, purpose, location, limits, right-of-way requirements, and activities involved in this box. Use Continuation Sheet, if necessary.)		
The California Department of Transportation is proposing a project to improve water quality, provide improved multi modal mobility, provide pavement rehabilitation and improve traffic operations in El Dorado County on SR 50 from post miles 75.4 to 77.3. The primary objective of this project is to collect and treat highway storm water runoff in order to comply with the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit (Board Order No 99-06-DWQ). In addition, the project will also achieve water quality, air quality/transportation, and community design goals as described in the Lake Tahoe Basin Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) adopted by the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA). Along State Route 50, in the City of South Lake Tahoe (CSLT), this project proposes to collect and treat stormwater runoff, install Treatment Best Management Practices (BMPs), improve the		
CEQA COMPLIANCE (for State Projects only)		
Based on an examination of this proposal and supporting information, the following statements are true and exceptions do not apply (See 14 CCR 15300 et seq.):		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If this project falls within exempt class 3, 4, 5, 6 or 11, it does not impact an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped and officially adopted pursuant to law. • There will not be a significant cumulative effect by this project and successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time. • There is not a reasonable possibility that the project will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances. • This project does not damage a scenic resource within an officially designated state scenic highway. • This project is not located on a site included on any list compiled pursuant to Govt. Code § 65962.5 ("Cortese List"). • This project does not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. 		
CALTRANS CEQA DETERMINATION (Check one)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Exempt by Statute. (PRC 21080[b]; 14 CCR 15260 et seq.)		
Based on an examination of this proposal, supporting information, and the above statements, the project is:		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Categorically Exempt. Class 1. (PRC 21084; 14 CCR 15300 et seq.)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Categorically Exempt. General Rule exemption. [This project does not fall within an exempt class, but it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity may have a significant effect on the environment (CCR 15061[b][3].)]		
Suzanne Melim Print Name: Environmental Branch Chief	CLARK A. PERI Print Name: Project Manager/DLA Engineer	
Suzanne Melim Signature	Clark A. Peri Signature	
7/17/2015 Date	7-17-15 Date	
NEPA COMPLIANCE		
In accordance with 23 CFR 771.117, and based on an examination of this proposal and supporting information, the State has determined that this project:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • does not individually or cumulatively have a significant impact on the environment as defined by NEPA and is excluded from the requirements to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), and • has considered unusual circumstances pursuant to 23 CFR 771.117(b). 		
CALTRANS NEPA DETERMINATION (Check one)		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 23 USC 326: The State has determined that this project has no significant impacts on the environment as defined by NEPA, and that there are no unusual circumstances as described in 23 CFR 771.117(b). As such, the project is categorically excluded from the requirements to prepare an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement under the National Environmental Policy Act. The State has been assigned, and hereby certifies that it has carried out the responsibility to make this determination pursuant to Chapter 3 of Title 23, United States Code, Section 326 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated June 07, 2013, executed between the FHWA and the State. The State has determined that the project is a Categorical Exclusion under:		
<input type="checkbox"/> 23 CFR 771.117(c): activity (c)()		
<input type="checkbox"/> 23 CFR 771.117(d): activity (d)()		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Activity 1_ listed in Appendix A of the MOU between FHWA and the State		
<input type="checkbox"/> 23 USC 327: Based on an examination of this proposal and supporting information, the State has determined that the project is a CE under 23 USC 327.		
Suzanne Melim Print Name: Environmental Branch Chief	CLARK A. PERI Print Name: Project Manager/DLA Engineer	
Suzanne Melim Signature	Clark A. Peri Signature	
7/17/2015 Date	7-17-15 Date	
Date of Categorical Exclusion Checklist completion:		Date of ECR or equivalent :

Briefly list environmental commitments on continuation sheet. Reference additional information, as appropriate (e.g., CE checklist, additional studies and design conditions).

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Continuation Sheet

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roadway pavement strategy and cross slope, widen shoulders to 6 feet to accommodate Class II bike lanes, improve curb and gutter, improve sidewalks, curb ramps, and driveways to comply with Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) standards, improve bus pullouts, improve traffic signals at four intersections (Third St, Tahoe Keys Blvd., Sierra Blvd. and Rubicon/Carson), add a new signal at Lodi Ave. intersection, add empty conduits for future street lighting, add a new right turn lane onto Tahoe Keys Blvd and dual left turn lanes at Sierra Blvd, and add four street lights at Motel 6 and Grocery Outlet intersection locations. Below are additional project details:

Updated Pavement Strategy

The pavement improvement strategy outlined in the PR included reconstructing shoulders and 3 feet of the outside lanes, and grinding and overlaying the remaining lanes. However, additional comprehensive coring showed that the pavement condition did not permit this strategy. The updated pavement strategy requires full reconstruction of the majority of the project.

Additional Improvements behind Sidewalk

Improving the cross slope changes and constructing ADA sidewalks and driveways requires the construction of retaining walls and driveway conforms. Bare or disturbed areas will be covered with mulch and rock blankets.

Bike Lane Designation

Proposed 6 ft shoulders (4' asphalt pavement and 2' concrete gutter pan) will be striped as Class II bike lanes.

Bus Pullouts and Right Turn Lane Widening

Many of the existing bus pullouts do not have sufficient width to accommodate buses. Where practicable, bus pullouts will be widened to a minimum of 10 ft to provide uninterrupted traffic flow in the #2 lanes. The existing right turn lanes require additional widening to accommodate through bike lane between the #2 lane and the right turn pocket.

Signal at Lodi Ave.

District 3 Traffic, Office of Rural Highway Operations, has reviewed the five year accident history report in this area. The report shows six broadside vehicles accidents, and pedestrian crossing accidents. There also exists a long gap of 3,720 feet between the signals at Tahoe Keys Blvd. and Sierra Blvd. which makes it difficult to keep platoons of traffic from spreading out.

The Office of Rural Highway Operations has determined that a signal warrant has been met at Lodi Ave. and recommended the installation of a signal.

Addition of this signal should result in the following:

- A reduction in broad side collisions.
- Improved pedestrian crossings of the highway.
- A shorter gap between signals and improved traffic flow.

Street Lights at Grocery Outlet and Motel 6

There is a likelihood of pedestrians crossing the highway near Station 136+00 between Motel 6 and Grocery Outlet market. There is no crosswalk nearby for pedestrians to use. District 3 Traffic, Office of Rural Highway Operations has determined the new street lights would improve nighttime visibility for drivers and improve pedestrian safety at that location.

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Dual Left Turn Lane at Sierra Blvd.

Due to the high residential traffic volumes and long green times on the highway, long queues form on the Sierra Blvd. approach. These volumes may also increase significantly if CSLT develops the proposed Golden Bear Park in this area.

Providing dual left turn lanes on Sierra Blvd. approach to Highway 50 was proposed in 2001 by a joint Caltrans/CSLT intersection improvement project. However, that project was not completed due to lack of funding.

Providing the dual left turn lanes should improve the traffic operations by:

- Reducing congestion on Sierra Blvd.
- Reducing the green time required for this approach.

A Cooperative Agreement with the City of South Lake Tahoe was signed on August 13, 2013 for the Sierra Blvd. funding contribution of \$282,000 which is approximately fifty percent of the improvement costs.

Right Turn Lane onto Tahoe Keys Blvd

District 3 Traffic, Office of Rural Highway Operations investigated the volume of traffic making this right turn at peak times is over 200 per hour, and determined right turn lane would allow the signal to operate more efficiently, reducing delays, queue lengths, emissions, and fuel consumption, and would improve safety.

Empty Conduit under Sidewalk

The CSLT has requested empty conduits and pull boxes be placed under the sidewalk to accommodate a future City sidewalk lighting project.

In addition, as part of this action, Caltrans and the City of South Lake Tahoe intend to enter into a cooperative agreement to relinquish existing Caltrans right-of-way from the back of new curb to the City. Caltrans will add empty conduits for future City light project as part of this relinquishment agreement. The relinquishment will take place after construction is complete.

Conclusion

By the scope of work, this project will not induce growth or change land use practices or substantially change the travel patterns. With implementation of standard avoidance and minimization measures (environmental commitments), the project will not result in effects to air quality, cultural resources, waters and wetlands, visual resources, the floodplain, biological resources, or 4(f) properties. In addition the project will not create substantial noise impacts, exceed hazardous waste thresholds, or result in significant relocations. The project is expected to result in permanent roadway and drainage features that improve and allow for management of storm water runoff into receiving waters.

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Environmental Commitments

The following commitments will be adhered and administered to as part of the construction contract:

Air Quality

There are no potential adverse significant impacts to air quality as a result of the project. Therefore, no mitigation measures are necessary. Nevertheless, below is a list of avoidance and minimization measures to reduce the emissions of fugitive dust. The dust control practices used will be in compliance with Caltrans Standard Construction Specifications. The provisions of Section 7-1.01F, Air Pollution Control, and Section 10 Dust Control require the contractor to comply with all pertinent rules, regulations, ordinances, and statutes of the local air district. These may include but are not limited to:

1. Covering open bodied trucks when used for transporting materials likely to give rise to airborne dust.
2. The use of water or chemicals for control of dust in the construction process and the grading of roads or the clearing of land.
3. Watering disturbed areas to form a compact surface after grading and earthwork.
4. Watering disturbed (graded or excavated) surfaces as necessary, increasing frequency when weather conditions require.
5. The prompt removal of earth or other material from paved roadways onto which earth or other material has been transported by trucking or earth moving equipment, erosion by water, or other means.

Cultural Resources

There are no potential adverse significant impacts to cultural resources as a result of the project. Therefore, no mitigation measures are necessary. However, the following measures must be followed during construction.

1. In the event that archaeological materials (e.g., artifacts including: arrowheads, bottles, foundations, etc.) are discovered during construction, it is Caltrans' policy that work temporarily cease in the area of the find until the Caltrans District Archeologist can evaluate the nature and significance of the materials and consult with the State Historic Preservation Office about the disposition of the materials (Environmental Handbook, Vol. 2, Chapter 1). Standard Specifications shall be included in the project contract to address Archaeological Discoveries.
2. In the event that human remains are discovered or recognized during construction, there shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent remains until the Placer County Coroner has determined that the remains are not subject to provisions of Section 27491 of the Government Code. If the remains are determined to be Native American, the coroner shall contact the Native American Heritage Commission (NARC) within 24 hours. The NARC will appoint a Most Likely Descendent for disposition of the remains (Health and Safety Code Sect. 7050.5, Public Resources Code Sect. 5097.24).
3. If buried cultural materials or human remains are encountered, *Caltrans environmental staff will be notified immediately.*

Waters and Wetlands

No significant changes to the hydrology of project area drainages are expected to occur and Best Management Practices (BMPs) and delineated Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) are proposed to avoid or minimize potential indirect impacts associated with ground disturbing activities near waters and wetlands.

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1. Potential direct and indirect impacts to wetlands will be avoided by designating these features outside of the construction impact area ESAs on project plans and in project specifications. ESA information will be shown on contract plans and discussed in the Special Provisions. ESA provisions may include, but are not limited to, the use of temporary orange fencing to exclude sensitive resources from potential construction impacts. Contractor encroachment into ESAs will be restricted (including the staging/operation of heavy equipment or casting of excavation materials). ESA provisions shall be implemented as a first order of work, and remain in place until all construction activities are complete.
2. Measures will be employed to prevent any construction material or debris from entering surface waters or their channels. BMPs for erosion control will be implemented and in place prior to, during, and after construction in order to ensure that no silt or sediment enters surface waters. Caltrans' Standard Specifications require the Contractor to submit a Water Pollution Control Plan. This plan must meet the standards and objectives to minimize water pollution impacts set forth in section 7-1.01G of Caltrans' Standard Specifications. The Water Pollution Control Plan must also be in compliance with the goals and restrictions identified in the Lahontan Water Quality Control Board's Basin Plan, as well as any additional measures included in TRPA permit.

Visual Resources

This segment of U.S. 50 is not an officially designated "State Scenic Highway". The Visual Impact Assessment concluded that the project will not impact the scenic quality of the road. To minimize temporary and permanent construction related effects, the scenic environmental commitments outlined below shall be incorporated into the project plans and specifications.

1. All disturbed areas, including slopes, basin walls and bottoms, drainage berms, vegetated swales, and construction staging areas, will be addressed with permanent erosion control. Permanent erosion control measures will include, but are not limited to: harvesting and applying duff to disturbed areas; incorporating compost to slope areas; hydro-seeding all disturbed areas with native plant species; and the topical application of pine needle mulch, fiber rolls, and erosion control blankets.
2. To minimize the risk of introducing additional non-native species into the area, only locally TRPA-approved plant species appropriate for the project area will be used in any erosion control or re-vegetation seed mix or stock. No dry-farmed straw will be used, and certified weed-free straw shall be required where erosion control straw is to be used. In addition, any hydro-seed mulch used for re-vegetation activities must also be certified weed-free.
3. A number of coniferous trees will be removed resulting from the construction of infiltration basins. Every effort will be taken to ensure that the number of trees removed is minimized. Replacement trees will be included in the re-vegetation plan to offset impacts.
4. Water quality improvement basins/ditches shall avoid the use of concrete or asphalt lining. Ditches shall be rock lined or vegetated whenever possible.
5. Avoid constructing features with harsh angles and steep slopes. Integrate features into surroundings through the use of curvilinear forms and contour grading.
6. Use native boulders and logs removed during clearing and grubbing operations as landscape elements to integrate basins into surroundings.
7. Basin side slopes should be designed with 1:3 to 1:4 slopes or flatter, when feasible, to promote successful re-vegetation.
8. Disturbed areas around basins in urban and residential settings should be landscaped and irrigated in order to improve appearance in the built environment.

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Floodplain

Based on the review of available data, including Flood Insurance Rate Map Community – Panel Number 0386E (Map Number 06017C0386E) for "El Dorado County, California, and Incorporated Areas," Effective Date September 26, 2008, the project will transversely encroach upon the 100-year floodplains at the Upper Truckee River and Trout Creek. However, the project will not be a longitudinal encroachment of the base floodplain at either location and does not constitute a significant floodplain encroachment as defined in 23 CFR § 650.105(q)(1,2). Therefore, no impacts to floodplains are anticipated as a result of the proposed project. No minimization measures are identified.

Biological Resources

Although there are sensitive resources within a vicinity of the biological study area, the project was designed to avoid any impacts to biological resources. The project will implement best management practices and place environmentally sensitive area fencing in appropriate locations to further avoid unintended impacts during construction.

The following avoidance measures will also be implemented:

1. All off-road construction equipment to be cleaned of potential noxious weed sources (mud, vegetation) before entry into the Lake Tahoe Basin, and after entering a potentially infested area before moving on to another area, to help ensure noxious weeds are not introduced into the project area. The contractor shall employ whatever cleaning methods (typically with the use of a high-pressure water hose) are necessary to ensure that equipment is free of noxious weeds. Equipment shall be considered free of soil, seeds, and other such debris when a visual inspection does not disclose such material.
2. Tree removal activities shall be carried out in conformance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. If vegetation cannot be removed outside the typical nesting (March 1st through August 15th), a pre-construction survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist to determine the presence of active nests.

Noise

There are no potential adverse significant impacts to noise as a result of the project. Therefore, no mitigation measures are necessary. Nevertheless, below is a list of avoidance and minimization measures to contain noise generated during construction.

1. The sound control practices used will be in compliance with Caltrans Standard Construction Specifications, Section 7-1.01 I, "Sound Control Requirements". This section requires the contractor to comply with all local sound control and noise level rules, regulations and ordinances, which apply to any work performed pursuant to the contract. Each internal combustion engine, used for any purpose on the job or related to the job, shall be equipped with a muffler of a type recommended by the manufacturer. No internal combustion engine shall be operated on the project without the muffler.

Hazardous Waste

Based on the hazardous waste initial site assessment performed for this project, soil and groundwater contaminated with petroleum hydrocarbons might be encountered within the project limits, at or near the following locations:

1. 1020 Emerald Bay Rd., Former South Y Shell Station
2. 986 Emerald Bay Rd., Runnels Automotive
3. Northwest quadrant of SR89/U.S. 50 Junction (the "Y"), unknown source

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4. 2733 Lake Tahoe Blvd., Lake Tahoe Presbyterian Church, multiple sources in the vicinity
5. West of Trout Creek, south of eastbound U.S. 50, parking area, multiple sources in the vicinity

No parcels within the project area, including the above locations, are included on any list compiled pursuant to Govt. Code § 65962.5 ("Cortese List"). All of the above potential and existing listed hazardous waste sites will require further evaluation if any portion(s) of the parcels on which they are located are to be acquired or if any basin, excavation, trenching or soil disturbance deeper than 1.52 m (5 ft) is proposed to take place on or immediately adjacent to these locations.

Yellow traffic markings (thermoplastic and paint) potentially contain hazardous levels of lead chromate. Yellow traffic markings that are removed separate from the adjacent pavement may have to be managed as hazardous waste.

Lead-contaminated soil may exist within and near our FJW due to the historical use of leaded gasoline, leaded airline fuels, waste incineration, and et-cetera. The areas of primary concern in relation to highway facilities are soils along routes with historically high vehicle emissions due to large traffic volumes, congestion, or stop and go situations. For practical purposes, most Aerially Deposited Lead (ADL), due to vehicle emissions, was deposited prior to 1986 when nearly all lead was removed from gasoline in California.

If the project area was constructed or re-constructed with clean material after 1986, it is likely that levels of ADL in the soil are low. The only way to approximate the level of ADL in soil is to sample and test the project area by performing a Preliminary Site Investigation (PSI). Depending on test results, disturbed soil on the project may have to be managed as hazardous waste.

Environmental Commitments

The following environmental commitments will be followed to ensure that there will be no significant impacts involving hazardous waste issues.

1. Project features in potential conflict with contaminated soil will be eliminated or moved. If conflicts cannot be eliminated, then the contaminated soil will be handled in accordance with the contract special provisions in accordance with the rules and regulations of local, state, and federal agencies.
2. If any existing paint systems will be disturbed by this project, a Lead-Based Paint Survey shall be requested, and a Non-Standard Special Provision may have to be prepared for inclusion in the contract special provisions.
3. A Lead Compliance Plan and a Health and Safety Plan shall be prepared to address worker safety when working with potentially lead-bearing paint or lead-bearing soils. The Health and Safety Plan shall also address worker safety when working with potentially contaminated soils/groundwater, and it should follow the requirements of Title 8, California Code of Regulations, Section 1532.1.
4. If striping paint is to be removed or impacted in any manner, sampling and testing of the yellow striping scheduled for removal will be performed to determine the presence of lead and the need for appropriate disposal prior to or during construction if the lead content is above the regulatory thresholds. Due to potentially hazardous levels of chromium and lead in yellow traffic stripes, if removal is included in the project scope, the stripe shall be removed and disposed in accordance with Caltrans Standard Special Provision 15-300.
5. If soil-disturbing activities are planned, a Preliminary Site Investigation (PSI) to determine the concentration of lead and level of ADL should be requested from the Hazardous Waste office and a Non-Standard Special Provision needs to be prepared for inclusion in the contract Special Provisions.
6. As part of the Clean Air Act, and the "National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants" (NESHAP), an ACM's (Asbestos Containing Materials) Surveys shall be conducted prior to any structure demolition and or/modification.

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Water Quality

The purpose of the project is to improve water quality through direct management of stormwater runoff. During construction there is the potential for activities to result in water pollution. The following measures will be part of the construction contract:

1. The project shall adhere to the conditions of the Caltrans Statewide NPDES Permit, issued by the State Water Resources Control Board.
2. Construction projects with a disturbed area of more than one acre or by request of a Regional Water Quality Control Board require a Caltrans approved Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) containing project specific effective erosion and sediment control measures. These measures must address soil stabilization practices, sediment control practices, tracking control practices, and wind erosion control practices. In addition, the project plan must include non-storm water controls, waste management, and material pollution controls.
3. The disturbed soil area appears to exceed one acre, and it is anticipated that a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) level of temporary pollution controls will be specified for the project; Standard Special Provision 07-345 therefore shall be included in the PS&E to address these temporary construction water pollution control measures.
4. As directed by the Caltrans Storm Water Management Plan (SWMP) and the Project Planning and Design Guide (PPDG) an evaluation of the project using the most recent approved evaluation guide is essential in determining if the incorporation of permanent storm water runoff treatment measures shall be considered for this project.
5. If a SWPPP is specified, then a Notification of Construction (NOC) shall be submitted to the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board at least 30 days prior to the start of construction.
6. The Project shall comply with Erosion Control Guidelines specified by the LRWQCB for Lake Tahoe Hydrologic Unit. Unless granted a variance by the LRWQCB Executive Officer, there shall be neither removal of vegetation nor disturbance of existing ground surface conditions between October 15 of any year and May 1 of the following year, except when there is an emergency situation that threatens the public health or welfare.